

**Fairfax Center Area Study
Springfield District Transition Area
Working Group Meeting
Wednesday, March 19, 2014**

Meeting Summary

The meeting began with introductions of members. There are seven members: Jeff Saxe (Chairman), Gail Brugger, Karan Shaffer, Robbie Stark, Philip Poole, Tony Wiley, Susan Yantis, and Tom McDonald.

Staff that will provide technical support for the group include Marlae Schnare from Supervisor Herrity's Office, Springfield District Planning Commissioner/Chairman Pete Murphy, Kimberly Rybold and Tom Merce from the Department of Planning and Zoning. Also in attendance was Meghan Van Dam, the Branch Chief for the Department of Planning and Zoning, Policy and Plan Development Branch.

Ms. Rybold led a discussion on the process, which is part of Fairfax Forward, a new method of updating the county's Comprehensive Plan. She also discussed the role of the committee. She stated that the group was an advisory body that would come together and formulate land use alternatives for Phase One of the Transition Area, generally located west of the Fairfax County Parkway and east of Stringfellow Road. She indicated that the group would both propose and screen ideas for changes and updates to the Plan. This is the first time that the Fairfax Center Plan has been comprehensively reviewed since 1982. She mentioned that in line with feedback received during public outreach, most of the focus will be on the unconsolidated properties along Lee Highway in the southern portion of the study area. She described the other portions of the study area as primarily being stable suburban neighborhoods.

Ms. Rybold provided the working group members with copies of the Fairfax Center Area Study Phase I Springfield District Community Outreach Report. The document summarized previous outreach efforts, provided a map of the study area, and a matrix of all the comments that were received during and since the October 7, 2013 Fairfax Center Area Study Kick-Off Open House. She summarized the received comments that spoke to the quality of life, connectivity (vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle), transportation, access to services, and other amenities that exist or are planned for the community.

A couple of questions were raised about roadway and transit improvements on Lee Highway. The Community Outreach Report notes that Lee Highway is planned to be widened to six lanes throughout the study area. When will this widening take place? Additional information was also requested regarding the study of bus transit along Lee Highway from Centreville to George Mason University. What is being studied, and what is the timeframe for study? Staff noted that they will follow up with the Fairfax County Department of Transportation to provide the working group with answers to these questions.

Following the community outreach summary were three presentations from developers on land use proposals within the study area. The presentations were as follows:

- Mark Lowen, Lenity Architecture – Hawthorn Retirement Residences
 - Proposed site is approximately six acres and currently features a one-story motel fronting on Lee Highway (Tax Map I.D. 55-4 ((1)) 31) and a single family home that is adjacent to Tractor Lane (Tax Map I.D. 55-4 ((1)) 30).
 - 130 unit, three-story congregate living facility.
 - 0.40 – 0.50 Floor-Area Ratio (FAR) including suites and amenities
 - Design includes open space with publically-accessible walking paths
 - Minimal traffic impact - approximately 247 vehicle trips per day
 - View the [presentation](#) for more detail, including the preliminary site plan and conceptual drawings of the proposal.
 - The working group asked some questions following the presentation. These include:
 - What is the parcel size, and is this large enough for your use? *It is about six acres, most sites are usually four to five acres so this is adequate.*
 - What about buffers to surrounding uses? Would mature trees be taken out? *The goal is to preserve as many mature trees as possible.*
 - What is the appearance from Lee Highway? It is preferred that there is quality frontage along Lee Highway rather than surface parking as shown on the preliminary site plan. *Buildings will be articulated and will step down on ends; details such as parking can be adjusted as this is a preliminary site plan.*
- John Thillmann - Landmark Atlantic Holdings, LLC
 - Proposed site is approximately 6.72 acres and is currently a single family home (Tax Map I.D. 55-4 ((1)) 9A).
 - The existing Plan guidance of two dwelling units per acre (du/ac) at the overlay level does not incentivize redevelopment. Mr. Thillmann believes the baseline level of development should be two du/ac and the PDH zoning classification should be the vehicle used to allow for creative site design rather than the existing three-tier baseline, intermediate, and overlay level development guidance in the existing Plan. A density of 3-4 du/ac is appropriate for the site.
 - This portion of the study area does not belong in the Fairfax Center Area.
- Clark Massie & John Regan - Christopher Land, LLC
 - Proposed site consists of eight parcels with approximately 1,000 feet of frontage along Lee Highway (Tax Map I.D. 55-4 ((1)) 29, 29A, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35 and 36B), including a one-story motel, single family homes and a towing company.
 - Overall desired density is 4.4 du/ac, including townhouses fronting along Lee Highway at 7 du/ac and single-family homes towards the rear at 2 du/ac adjacent to the existing single family development. A change to Plan recommendations would only be needed for the parcels fronting Lee Highway
 - Vehicular connections could be made to Crouch Dr. and Tractor Ln.
 - The working group asked some questions and offered comments following the presentation. These include:
 - Would a traffic light be needed? VDOT would have to make that determination. The townhouses and single family could have separate access if needed.
 - There could be a concern about compatibility of new single family residences and existing neighborhoods, particularly if there are vehicular connections. What is the traffic impact of the proposal? *Mr. Regan said it would be*

approximately 360 additional vehicle trips per day. Mr. Regan also mentioned that it is generally encouraged by the county that infill developments such as this tie into existing road networks to improve traffic circulation.

- *How will the Willow Springs Towing Company be treated if they are not interested in selling their property? Mr. Massie responded that they would work with the owner to acquire land to put in a road connecting the development to Lee Highway.*
- *Are there local comparisons of townhouses along Lee Highway? Mr. Regan cited examples along Lee-Jackson Memorial Highway just east of the City of Fairfax, as well as Buckleys Reserve to the east of this site along Lee Highway.*

After the presentations, the work group asked staff about the possibility of accelerating the land use portion of the planning process. Ms. Rybold said that staff could conduct broad impact analyses for the next meeting; however the actual impact analysis is scheduled to begin at the end of April - early May 2014.

The work group decided that it would use the next meeting to identify land use issues and frame questions. The group also asked staff to send a PDF of the study area map used for the meeting. Ms. Rybold said staff would prepare corridor graphic and large-scale maps of the underutilized parcels in the study area for the next meeting.

The work group decided to schedule the second meeting for Wednesday, April 23rd at 6:30 PM. The meeting will be held at the Government Center in Conference Room 232. The meeting will focus on further exploring land use alternatives to be analyzed within the Springfield District portion of the Transition Area.